

A Guidebook for Working with Volunteers



“The success of society lies in the willingness of its citizens to give of themselves, to perform or give a service of their own free will.”

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Introduction

In the Beginning...

Paul Kroegel, a young German immigrant and boat-builder, once volunteered for several months to stop people from killing the pelicans that nested on an island near his home in Florida.



As time went by and the word got around of Paul's presence, people started referring to the island as "Paul's Island." He was so successful in protecting the pelicans that the government hired him for one dollar a month!

In 1903 the government changed the name to Pelican Island and Paul Kroegel went from being the first volunteer to the government's first refuge manager.



The Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (as amended by the Fish and Wildlife Improvement Act of 1978 Public Law 95-616) authorizes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Volunteer Program. Since 1982 the Service, and the fish and wildlife entrusted in our care, has benefitted from the contributions of many thousands of volunteers who have contributed to date over 1.5 million hours.

The National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Act of 1998 was signed October 5, 1998. The new Act has an entire section focusing on Volunteer Enhancement. Policies for implementation of the Act have not been completed. We intend to add sections on Emergency Procedures, International Volunteers and other subjects as needed, as well as update and change sections as policies change.

The objectives of this "Guidebook for Working with Volunteers" is to increase the productive use of volunteers in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This guidebook will take you step-by-step through the mechanics of initiating and running a volunteer program at your field station. Throughout the guidebook you will find techniques, alternatives and samples that you can use on your station. You may want to adapt some or all of these ideas to fit into your volunteer program. Policy and procedure guidance for the program can be found in the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 16, Section 742F(c), the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual, Part 150, chapters 1-3 "Volunteer Services Program" and Part 240 chapter 9 "Occupational Safety and Health, Volunteer and Youth Program." The 3-ring binder format will allow the book to be updated as the policies are completed and changes occur.

Table of Contents

In the Beginning

I. Groundwork	I-1
A. Who Can Be a Volunteer?	I-1
1. Relationships with Other Programs/Organizations	I-1
2. Service Employees and Family Members	I-1
3. Pay for Volunteer Work	I-1
B. What Can Volunteers Do?	I-1
C. What Volunteers Cannot Do	I-2
D. The Volunteer Job Description	I-3
■ Sample Job Descriptions	I-5
II. Recruiting Volunteers	II-1
A. Characteristics of a Good Recruitment Message	II-1
B. Mass Media: Radio, TV, Newspapers, Internet	II-1
C. Posters, Flyers, and Publications	II-1
D. Personal Contacts	II-1
■ Sample News Release	II-3
III. Selecting Volunteers	III-1
A. Screening Applications	III-1
B. Conducting Interviews	III-1
■ Volunteer Application for Natural Resources	III-3
■ Sample Volunteer Recruitment Letter	III-5
■ Volunteer Application for Bosque Del Apache Refuge	III-7
■ Volunteer Interview Record	III-11
■ Volunteer Services Agreement	III-13
■ Parental Approval Form	III-15
IV. Orientation and Training	IV-1
A. Orientation	IV-1
1. Ideas for a Volunteer Orientation Packet	IV-1
B. Training	IV-1
■ Volunteer Orientation Checklist	IV-3
■ Volunteer Time Log	IV-5
■ Balance of Rights and Responsibilities Between Volunteers and Paid Staff	IV-15
■ Volunteer Feedback Form	IV-17

V. Protection and Benefits	V-1
A. Volunteer Safety	V-1
B. Injury Compensation and Tort Claims Protection	V-1
C. Drivers License	V-1
D. Travel	V-1
E. Housing	V-2
F. Reimbursement of expenses	V-2
1. Reimbursement from Imprest Fund	V-2
2. Reimbursement by Treasury Check	V-2
G. Uniforms	V-2
1. Service Policy	V-2
2. Approved Uniform Components	V-2
3. Optional Uniform Components	V-2
■ Special Purpose Order Form	V-3
■ Volunteer Apparel	V-5
■ Authorization for Operation of Government-Owned Vehicle Form ...	V-7
VI. Supervision and Recognition	VI-1
A. Supervision	VI-1
1. Provide a Good Working Environment	VI-1
2. Evaluation	VI-1
B. Recognition	VI-1
1. National Volunteer Week	VI-1
2. Suggested Ways to Recognize Volunteer Contributions	VI-2
■ Sample Award Scale	VI-3
■ Sample Awards	VI-5
■ Volunteer Evaluation	VI-19
VII. Annual Volunteer Report	VII-1
■ Volunteer Services Report Forms	VII-5

I. Groundwork

A. Who Can Be a Volunteer?

*Definition of a volunteer
(29 CFR 553.101)*

An individual who performs hours of service for a public agency for civic, charitable, or humanitarian reasons, without promise, expectation or receipt of compensation for services rendered, is considered to be a volunteer during such hours.

Almost anyone can participate in the Fish and Wildlife Service volunteer program. General information on volunteer eligibility is contained in *Part 150 FWS 2.1*.¹

1. Relationship with Other Programs/Organizations

Volunteers may be individuals or they may be associated with educational institutions, the community, prison work camps, alternative sentencing programs, environmental organizations or other organizations, such as Refuge Support Groups. Whether an individual or an organization, *all volunteers must sign a Volunteer Service Agreement. If volunteer work is done in association with an institution or organization, the representative of the organization should sign a Volunteer Service Agreement and a list of all participants should be attached to the agreement.* (Example: If you sign up Boy Scout Troop #XXX please attach a list of all of the scouts that volunteered to the Volunteer Services Agreement.)

2. Service Employees and Family Members

Service employees may do volunteer work, and receive the benefits of injury compensation and tort claim protection. However, it must be absolutely clear to employees and supervisors alike that employees are, under no circumstances, to be urged to perform their job duties as volunteers.

Family members of Service employees may do volunteer work for the Service provided the Service official signing the Volunteer Agreement is not a member of the volunteer's immediate family. If financial reimbursement is involved, the regional volunteer coordinator and/or ethics counselor should be consulted before such an agreement is made. A conflict of interest could result if a family member or relative of a Service employee were to receive financial benefit from the program. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest should be avoided.

3. Pay for Volunteer Work

Volunteers may or may not receive credit (financial or otherwise) for their work. It does not matter if the volunteer receives pay, work credit, academic credit or other compensation from sources *outside* the Service, as long as the Service does not pay the individual for the work. *Note:* Participants in programs that pay wages, such as YCC, Job Corps and Americorps, are not considered volunteers during their working hours. Student Conservation Association (SCA) individuals are counted as volunteers, refer to *150 FW 1.6C*.²

B. What Can Volunteers Do?

1. Volunteers may do almost any type of work for the Service. Through the help provided by volunteers, project leaders can accomplish jobs that would not otherwise get done because of funding or personnel limitations. Refer to *150 FWS 1.8*.³ Volunteers, however, should never displace paid employees.

2. Good planning will help develop a good program. Before you start a volunteer program, do the following:

- Write down all of the jobs on your station that you would like to have

done if you had sufficient time and staff.

- Be very specific and do not think about whether volunteers can or cannot do them.

Listed below are dozens of jobs that volunteers have performed on stations throughout the country.

Partial Volunteer Jobs List

Maintenance

- Check hiking trails once a week for safety hazards, vandalism and litter
- Cleaning up litter/trash
- Build/maintain buildings
- Perform general maintenance duties
- Landscaping
- Marking boundaries
- Maintaining vehicles

¹150 FWS 2.1 *Volunteer Eligibility and Status*

Eligibility for Participation. Volunteer services will be accepted from the public without regard to race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, political affiliation, religion, disability, or any other non-merit factor. Acceptance of volunteer services is not limited to United States citizens. If non-citizens wish to volunteer, they must provide documentation as to their residence status as required by Federal or State Law.

²150 FWS 1.6 *c Definitions*

Student Conservation Association Program Participant. A volunteer of either high school or college age who was recruited through the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and whose volunteer service is defined under the national agreement between the Service and the SCA. The national agreement is on file in the Washington Office, Division of Contracting and General Services.

³150 FW 1.8 *Acceptable Volunteer Services*

Volunteer services can be used in almost any capacity (except as specified in 1.8B) to complement or supplement existing work or to do projects which otherwise would not be done. Volunteers will not be used to displace any employee, to staff a position that is a normal part of the Service's work force, or to impair authorized service-type contracts.

- Obliterating/rehabilitating trails
- Organizing/assisting clean-up campaigns
- Preparing and maintaining trails
- Reestablishing natural vegetation
- Rehabilitating overused campsites
- Removing graffiti
- Replacing old/vandalized boundary signs
- Stabilizing/preserving roads

Administrative

- Coordinate volunteer program
- Perform computer programming/analysis
- Edit
- File or type
- Provide first aid courses to staff
- Monitor visitation
- Observe/report LE problems
- Operate/organize library
- Prepare volunteer orientation packets
- Provide courier service
- Recruit volunteers
- Reorganize the filing system
- Serve as librarian
- Staff a first aid station
- Train volunteers
- Work on a "gifts catalog"
- Staff Cooperative Association Bookstore sales outlets

Resource Management/Biology

- Assist in feral animal reduction
- Conduct plant inventory and develop a plant list
- Conduct animal censuses/surveys
- Conduct bioexaminations
- Conduct historical, archaeological paleontological surveys
- Conduct small mammal studies
- Collect/transcribe oral history
- Perform archeological work
- Perform cross-country ski patrols

- Perform fishing creel censuses
- Feed research animals
- Identify cultural resource sites
- Identify insects
- Mapping
- Monitor or clean-up contaminants
- Manipulate habitat
- Set up pest management programs
- Stock/inventory fish
- Take air quality readings
- Write/edit biological reports

Public Use

- Catalog/clean museum collections
- Compile a bird list
- Conduct programs for people with disabilities
- Develop artwork
- Develop educational materials
- Perform campground checks
- Give lectures
- Give talks to children's groups
- Host special events
- Lead environmental education activities
- Lead hikes on special topics
- Lead tours
- Maintain native plant displays
- Patrol trails
- Photograph species, habitats, public use
- Prepare multimedia programs
- Produce/maintain audio-visual materials
- Produce publications
- Serve as artist-in-residence
- Sign for deaf visitors
- Staff hunter check stations
- Staff visitor center/contact station
- Update slide file with new, current pictures
- Write trail guides

C. What Volunteers Cannot Do

Volunteers may not do:

- any job involving active law enforcement (detaining or arresting individuals, issuing citations or warnings, or carrying firearms for law enforcement purposes.)
- any job involving the handling of government money, except for the collection of entrance or use of fees as amended by Public Law 99-645.

Note: Hazardous duties require specialized training and awareness by the volunteer of the hazards involved. A statement describing the hazardous duty should be part of the Volunteer Agreement. Refer to *150 FW 1.8B(1-3)*⁴

⁴*150 FW 1.8B Prohibited Volunteer Services*

(1) Volunteers will not be used in regulation or active law enforcement activities. Volunteers cannot issue citations or carry firearms associated with law enforcement activities; however, they may observe and report problems.

(2) Volunteers will not be used in certain hazardous jobs, such as firefighting and operating heavy equipment, unless they have completed the appropriate Federal training. Individuals who meet fire qualification requirements may be hired as emergency firefighters on a DE 530 Emergency Employment and Time Sheet, available from the regional office. Once hired, these individuals are no longer considered volunteers.

The use of volunteers for other jobs that involve safety considerations must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the volunteer's training to perform such work. Special care must be exercised when utilizing volunteers under 18 years of age. In these cases, provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, as it addresses child labor, apply. A Job Hazard Analysis should be developed for all hazardous activities in accordance with guidance provided in 240 FW 2, for any activity for which an injury or accident has been reported (see 240 FW 7). When the analysis requires operational and safety training or equipment, the volunteer will not perform the job until all training is completed, the supervisor knows the volunteer's work capability, the volunteer understands the job and its hazards, and appropriate equipment is supplied.

(3) Volunteers will not collect fees or handle money owed to the U.S. Government, except pursuant to Public Law 99-645, which authorizes volunteers to collect entrance fees. Entrance fees include Golden Eagle Passports, Golden Age Passports and Federal Duck Stamps, as well as single visit entrance fees.

D. The Volunteer Job Description

1. *The job description will save time and effort later and:*

- is essential for recruiting, interviewing and selecting a volunteer who is qualified for the specific job.

- saves time when completing the Volunteer Service Agreement (attach the completed job description)

- provides required information in case of tort claims or worker's compensation cases.

- outlines what is expected of the volunteer(s).

- helps the volunteer(s) decide if they want the position.

- indicates training requirements and needs.

2. *To create motivating jobs for volunteers, follow these tips:**

- Make sure that the job is one that the volunteer's supervisor wants done. Some questions you may want to ask the supervisor:

a. What are some parts of your job that must be done but that you often do not or cannot get done?

b. What are some things you wish you could do but lack the time to get done?

c. What are some things you would like to see done but that no one has the skills to do? Jobs the supervisor wants done are jobs that will be valued and appreciated.

- Make sure that the job is one the volunteer wants to do. Instead of trying to fit the volunteer to the job, build a job around the volunteer's skills and interests.

- Make sure that the volunteer knows the purpose of the job. Volunteers find jobs most meaningful if they can see the connection of the job to the mission of the organization.

- Make sure that the volunteer has ownership, either by him/herself or with a team of volunteers. Volunteers should be able to feel that

Volunteer Job Description	
Station Name	
Job Title	
Qualifications	
Duties and Responsibilities	
Time Commitment	
Supervisor	

something is theirs, such as an aisle in a gift shop, a project they are working on, or a particular product that they are making.

- Volunteer jobs should define the results the volunteer is responsible for achieving, not simply list the tasks the volunteer performs.

- Volunteers should have the ability to make some decisions regarding

their work. They should have the authority to fulfill their responsibilities.

- Volunteers should be able to tell if they are doing a good job. There should be some mechanism to give them feedback on how well they are achieving their results.

* Item 2 courtesy of Rick Lynch and Steve McCurley.

Sample

Name of Field Station

Job Description for Visitor Services Volunteers

I. Purpose

Visitor Services Volunteers often do a wide range of diverse jobs. This includes providing information to the public, working on special projects, and running the office of the Visitor Center.

The qualifications and responsibilities listed below should give you an idea of the different aspects of visitor services, but not represent one person's job description.

II. Qualifications

A. Willingness to obtain knowledge and understanding of nature, ecology, habitats, adaptations, wildlife, plants, and birds with the ability to quickly learn local ecosystems, common flora and fauna, and local and migratory birds which use the refuge. Above average birding skills and knowledge would be a plus since a major component of visitor information is identifying birds in the field.

B. Ability to clearly understand the purpose of this refuge and its wildlife management programs as well as the National Wildlife Refuge System, and ability to learn the layout of the refuge and tour loop.

C. An enjoyment in working with and leading diverse groups of people.

D. Good interpersonal, communications, and public speaking skills with the ability to present a positive image to the public and to learn interpretation techniques and to articulate information, in person and by phone.

E. Ability to handle stressful situations involving visitors. Confident but knowing when to seek assistance with questions or problems that arise.

F. Willingness and flexibility to accept responsibility of assisting staff and visitors when needed. Ability to work on a team in a service capacity.

G. A valid driver's license.

H. Ability to learn to operate: computers for word processing, and other basic functions, printers, photo copiers, cash registers, FAX machines, postage meters, telephone consoles, and other office equipment. Ability to create and maintain filing systems Ability to learn to operate binoculars, scopes, and tripods.

I. Ability to type at least 30 WPM and to compose letters and to proof-read written material for grammar and spelling.

J. Physical ability to sit and stand for long periods and to move around the office. May hike the refuge trails, work outdoors in adverse weather, stoop and bend, and to do occasional lifting.

III. Responsibilities

A. Visitor Center Volunteer Responsibilities:

1. Open and close Visitor Center including: stocking supplies in gift shop; balancing daily register and credit card tills; turning lights, videos, and games on/off; locking/unlocking doors.
2. Greet visitors and provide helpful and accurate information and materials.
3. Operate and manage cash registers and credit card machine.
4. Sell publications and other merchandise.
5. Issue Golden Age, Golden Eagle, Golden Access, and Refuge passes and Duck Stamps.
6. Answer phones and provide refuge information to inquiries.
7. Keep public use staff informed of supplies, brochures, passes, change, etc.
8. Report any problems and/or potential problems to the public use staff.
9. Manage fee booth as needed on winter weekends.
10. Help conduct visitor surveys when needed.

11. Light cleaning and restocking of supplies in public restrooms and Visitor Center, sweeping and emptying trash containers at Visitor Center entrance way, sweeping of sidewalks, light cleaning of public use vehicles, and refueling of vehicles.

12. May perform a variety of other duties, particularly those listed in this Public Use Job Description.

B. Visitor Center Coordinator—Responsibilities:

In addition to the Visitor Center duties Coordinator is responsible for the following additional duties:

1. Ensure that Visitor Center maintenance checklist is accomplished weekly.
2. Train volunteers on front desk procedures.
3. Delegate work to other volunteers for Visitor Center operations.
4. May be asked to assist with or perform other duties, particularly those listed in this Visitor Services job description.

C. Office—Responsibilities:

1. Compose and type memos, letters, reports, and word process material.
2. Answer and route incoming phone calls. Provide visitor information to callers using good communications/public relations techniques.
3. Operate the refuge two-way radios. Give and record clear, concise, and accurate information.
4. Respond to written inquiries and prepare, copy, collate, stockpile, and distribute information packets by mail.

5. Sort and distribute incoming mail; weigh and meter outgoing mail.

6. Operate office machines.

7. Enter computer data.

8. Run errands on refuge compound or to town.

9. May book tours, reserve conference room, campground, and auditorium in the absence of coordinator.

10. Inventory brochures and order when necessary.

11. Order passes and Duck Stamps when needed.

12. Inventory equipment.

13. Visitor fees: make change for and prepare collection boxes, collect boxes from booth, sort envelopes, and keep ledger.

14. May perform other duties, particularly those on this Visitor Services job description.

D. Interpretation/Tours—Responsibilities:

1. Speak with visitor groups in the visitor center, explaining the purpose of the refuge, answering questions, and identifying wildlife.

2. Provide orientations, hands-on, and guided refuge tours to approved scheduled groups. Explain the refuge purpose, history, management and include information on animals and birds.

3. Drive throughout the refuge speaking with visitors, explaining the purpose of the refuge, identifying wildlife, answering questions, and radio in to the Visitor

Center the locations of wildlife/birds. Watch for unusual situations and report them to headquarters. Document illegal visits or trespass into closed areas.

4. Set up scopes for visitor observation and explain the proper use of scopes and binoculars.

5. May perform other duties, particularly those on this Visitor Services job description.

E. Interpreter/Tour Guide Coordinator — Responsibilities:

In addition to the Interpreter/Tour Guide duties the Coordinator is responsible for the following additional duties:

1. In the absence of a Ranger/Naturalist FWS employee, train new interpreter/guides on how to conduct tours and orientations and provide them with accurate information about the refuge and its animal/bird inhabitants. Train Visitor Center front desk people on presentation skills and on pertinent information which will allow them to be able to accurately answer questions from visitors including preparing written instructional materials.

2. Take weather readings and feed birds during Ranger/Naturalist's absence.

3. In the absence of a Ranger/Naturalist, may coordinate and conduct on-site or off-site programs or workshops for schools or the community.

4. May perform other duties, particularly those on this Visitor Services job description.

*F. Special Projects Assistant—
Responsibilities:*

1. Prepare and mail out letters.
2. Respond to requests by sending out information and guides.
3. Visit schools upon request to explain contests and to present a slide show.
4. Enter computer data for Jr. Duck Stamp contestants.
5. Assist with art contest judging event.
6. Help obtain donations for contest prizes, silent auctions, lunches, and barbeques.
7. Send out certificates and return artwork to contestants.
8. Assist with displaying artwork at various public locations.
9. Assist with compiling packets for children for fishing clinic.
10. Assist with cooking and serving at fishing clinic. At the fishing clinic and Datil Conservation Day assists by setting up and staffing a station.
11. Assist with special national or regional meetings.
12. Assist with coordination of commercial and non-profit exhibitors.

13. Assist with numerous jobs prior to and during the Festival of the Cranes.

14. Arrange for service projects with groups such as the Boy Scouts, etc.

15. May be asked to assist with other duties as assigned such as office or Visitor Center.

IV. Time Commitment—Benefits

1. _____ hour day— _____ hour week.

2. Volunteers will receive \$ _____ subsistence for every eight hours of volunteer work if primary residence is more than 30 miles from the field site or \$ _____ per mile traveled to and from the field station if primary residence is within 30 miles of the field site.

V. Supervisor

The (title of refuge employee supervising) will supervise the volunteer Visitor Center assistants and will delegate this responsibility to another staff member in his/her absence. Volunteers will report to the supervisor for assignments.

Sample

Name of Field Station

Job Description for Resource Management Volunteer

Qualifications

A background or a strong desire to work with wildlife management, conservation, ecology or biology. A college degree or formal education is not necessary.

An ability to do strenuous, physically demanding jobs for long periods of time.

A desire to treat volunteer service as a serious responsibility. Volunteers are expected to complete a training program, wear a uniform, and report for duty on schedule.

Duties

Assist biologists with a variety of field work related to wildlife management.

Assist with on-going or one-time projects at the field station.

Help with office projects, lab work or field work.

Opportunities are available for volunteers to work on an individual basis, or with other staff and volunteers on the following projects:

- Planting wildlife food grasses
- Helping with bird counts
- Working with habitat restoration projects
- Doing data entry on the computer
- Filing

Obligations

Volunteers to complete a training program provided by the staff.

Volunteers to provide their own transportation to and from the job.

Volunteers to be willing to serve without monetary compensation.

Volunteers to be willing to contribute a minimum of _____ hours per month.

Volunteers to report for work on dates and times agreed upon. Missing a work period without prior notification can result in dismissal from the Volunteer Program.

Supervision

Volunteers will be supervised by the FWS Biologist or the Volunteer Coordinator. Some projects will require more supervision than others, depending on the difficulty of the project and experience level of the volunteer.

Effects

Volunteers have frequent contact with other employees and the general public, other Service personnel, and representatives of other conservation agencies and organizations. Most public contacts are to share knowledge, answer questions, or otherwise improve public understanding of the Service, the field station, and environmental issues.

The Volunteer's performance directly affects:

- Public understanding of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the field station, and environmental problems.
- The overall purpose of the field site and efforts of staff is to protect habitat for endangered species as well as migratory shorebirds and waterfowl.
- The effectiveness, quality and success of site operations.
- The Service's public image.

Sample

Name of Field Station

Job Description for Maintenance Volunteer

Qualifications

An interest or background in working on maintenance type projects (mechanics, carpentry, etc.). Some of the maintenance projects require minimal (or no) technical skills. Training may be provided to bring the knowledge or skill level to meet the need of the job. Others would require technical skills.

An interest and an ability in performing physically active work.

A desire to treat volunteer service as a serious responsibility. Volunteers are expected to complete a training program, wear a uniform, and report for duty on schedule.

Duties

Assist Maintenance staff with many aspects of the day-to-day maintenance projects.

Assist with special one-time maintenance projects at the field station.

There are opportunities for volunteers to work on an individual basis, or with other staff and volunteers on a variety of maintenance projects. Types of projects include:

- Washing/Waxing vehicles
- Minor vehicle maintenance (changing oil, etc.)
- Painting

- Carpentry projects

- Running errands (i.e., buying supplies at the hardware store or lumber yard)

- Trimming trees

- Pulling weeds

- Running the “weed whip”

Obligation

Volunteers to complete a training program provided by the staff.

Volunteers to provide their own transportation to and from the job.

Volunteers to be willing to serve without monetary compensation.

Volunteers to be willing to contribute a minimum of _____ hours per month.

Volunteers to report for work on dates and times agreed upon. Missing a work period without prior notification can result in dismissal from the Volunteer Program.

Supervision

Volunteers will be supervised by the FWS maintenance staff or the Volunteer Coordinator. Some projects will require more supervision than others, depending on the difficulty of the projects and experience level of the volunteer.

Effects

Volunteers have frequent contact with other volunteers, station employees, the general public, Service personnel, and representatives of other conservation agencies and organizations. Most public contacts are to share knowledge, answer questions, or otherwise improve public understanding of the Service, the field station, and environmental issues.

The Volunteer’s performance directly affects:

- Public understanding of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the field station, and environmental problems.

- Visitor’s safety and comfort, the Service’s public image, and the effectiveness, quality and success of station operations.

Sample

Name of Field Station

Job Description for Interpretive Volunteer Position

Qualifications

A background or interest in conservation, natural history, ecology or biology. A college degree or formal education is not necessary.

Enjoy meeting and dealing with people.

Patience and tact. Visitors all seem to ask the same questions. Some may be irritable, and occasionally children may pose discipline problems.

Answer questions regarding hunting or provide information to hunters, as many stations are open to hunting.

A desire to treat volunteer service as a serious responsibility. Volunteers are expected to complete a training program, wear a uniform, and report for duty on schedule.

Duties

The goal of interpretation is to promote a conservation ethic in visitors. This ethic can be described as a feeling of personal responsibility, or stewardship, for the well-being of the natural environment.

Volunteers will assist the paid interpretive/public use staff in working toward this goal by increasing public awareness and understanding of the fish and wildlife resource, and the natural environment.

Volunteers may also become involved in the following duties:

- Researching, preparing and presenting interpretive programs such as slide programs and guided walks.

- Cataloging and caring for collections (publications, photographs, specimens and artifacts).

- Assisting with special events such as Kid's Day, National Wildlife Week, Earth Day, International Migratory Bird Day, Cleanups, and Native Plant Sales.

Volunteers will also help protect resources and visitor safety by informing visitors of potential safety hazards, conducting programs in a safe and orderly manner, reporting safety hazards and instances of law-breaking to a Public Safety Officer, and attempting to correct minor infractions through interpretation. **Volunteers shall not engage in law enforcement.**

Obligations

Volunteers to complete a training program provided by the staff.

Volunteers to provide their own transportation to and from the job.

Volunteers to be willing to serve without monetary compensation.

Volunteers to be willing to contribute a minimum of _____ hours per month. Volunteers are primarily needed on Saturdays and Sundays — our busiest days year-around. During the summer months, however, we can use help every day.

Volunteers have regularly scheduled hours. Volunteers report for work on dates and times agreed upon. Missing a work period without prior notification can result in dismissal from the Volunteer Program.

Supervision

Volunteers will be supervised by the FWS public use staff or the Volunteer Coordinator. Initially a staff interpreter will work closely with each volunteer. Once a volunteer feels comfortable, he/she will be permitted to work independently. Work will be spot checked to provide feedback and constructive criticism.

Effects

Volunteers have frequent contact with other employees and the general public, other Service personnel, and representatives of other conservation agencies and organizations. Most public contacts are to share knowledge, answer questions, or otherwise improve public understanding of the Service, the field station, and environmental issues.

The Volunteer's performance directly affects:

- Public understanding of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the station, and environmental problems.

- Visitor's safety and comfort, the Service's public image, and the effectiveness, quality and success of operations.

II. Recruiting Volunteers

A. Characteristics of a Good Recruitment Message

- The opening of the message should be interesting enough to entice the potential volunteer to continue reading or listening. The body of the message should be appealing enough to interest the potential volunteer in considering the volunteer opportunity or, at least, in contacting the agency to get more information.

- As a general rule, spend more space on need than on logistics. People will first decide whether you are worth volunteering for and then decide whether they can fit you into their schedule.

- The message should be easily understood.

- The message should give a complete picture: problem, type of work, requirements, time frame, person to contact.*

- The contact information for the message should give the name of a person and a phone number not just the name of the agency. Volunteering is a personal decision and people like to talk with other people about it.*

- Your search for volunteers may include mass media; flyers, posters, and publications; and personal contact with organizations and individuals.*

B. Mass Media: Radio, TV, Newspapers, Internet

- General news releases (see generic news release in this section)

- Public service announcements on radio or TV

- Volunteer opportunities column in local newspaper

- Local TV and radio talk shows

- Feature articles about station and volunteer program in magazine or newspapers

C. Posters, Flyers, and Publications

- Get permission and place posters and/or flyers in the public library, local banks, post office, senior citizen center, grocery store, town hall, recreation center, and churches.

- Provide information to organization newsletters and other publications.

- Contact corporations for coverage in their employee newsletters.

- Develop displays, exhibits, brochures, showing volunteers in action for use at fairs and shopping malls as well as in the station office or visitor center. (Contact the Regional Office for assistance)

D. Personal Contacts

- Staff a booth at the State or County fair.

- Participate in high school or college career days.

- Recruit in the visitor center.

- Give presentations to civic groups, conservation organizations, garden clubs, university groups, etc.

- Contact special interest groups such as organizations representing persons with disabilities, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., The National Rifle Association, the National Association of Retired Persons, and the United Way.

- Scouting groups

- The Sheriff's Office

* Courtesy of Rick Lynch and Steve McCurley.

Sample News Release

(STATION NAME)

Seeking Volunteers

Do you have some spare time? Would you like to do something interesting to help wildlife? Consider becoming a volunteer for (field station name.) As a volunteer, you will be actively involved in station programs by performing such jobs as (list jobs at the station that need to be done.) Volunteering is fun but it does require a commitment. (field station name) is looking for volunteers who can serve a minimum of _____ hours per (week, month, etc.). Refuge staff will provide the necessary training and equipment. All you need to provide are time and enthusiasm. Please contact (name) at (phone number) for further information on the volunteer program.

III. Selecting Volunteers

A. Screening Applications

You may not wish to interview everyone who inquires about your volunteer program since conducting a proper interview takes time. To screen potential volunteers before the interview Form OF 301 “Volunteer Application for Natural Resources Agencies,” can be used. A copy of the form is provided in this section of the guidebook. Some field stations have developed their own form which can be substituted (see example in this section.)

It is important to respond to all applications that are received. A form letter should be developed to thank those individuals who expressed interest in your volunteer program, but whose background and interest do not fit your needs at this particular time. You may wish to include a list of alternative places in your area where the applicant might volunteer. For instance, a state or county park, National Forest, Corps of Engineers campground, etc.

B. Conducting Interviews

The interview is important because it allows you to judge attitude, enthusiasm and other qualities not reflected in the application. During the interview detailed questions can be asked by both the volunteer and the interviewer regarding skills, interests, project-related specifics, and necessary negotiation. This would also be a good time to explain the mission of the Service and the individual program area. Conduct the interview in the same manner that you would for a paid position. The following are some suggestions to consider when conducting the interview.

Before the Interview

- Ensure privacy; use screens to divide room if others share space or try to get a separate room.
- Hold all calls and visitors; eliminate all distractions and interruptions.
- Allow adequate amount of interview time.
- Have the prospective volunteer’s completed application in front of you.
- Be able to suggest other agencies/ places that need volunteers.

During the Interview

- Be friendly and show an interest in the volunteer.
- State the purpose of the interview (e.g., to obtain general information, discuss interests/preferences; match the right person with the volunteer position).
- Make notes about any new information that was not in the application.
- Present information clearly and concisely so it is easily understood (e.g., type of jobs available, worker’s compensation, time commitment, tort claims).

- Suitable questions might include:

“How did you find out about our volunteer program?”

“Why are you interested in volunteering here?”

“What type of volunteer job are you interested in?”

“Have you done anything similar in the past?”

- Discuss information from their application form.
- Look for both ability and willingness to do a job.
- Do not talk volunteers into something they do not want to do.
- Make sure that the volunteer understands his/her commitment.
- Ask the volunteer to tell friends who might be interested in volunteering to contact you.
- Do NOT be afraid to refuse a potential volunteer’s service if the applicant is unsuitable to your program.
- Express your appreciation for having had this time with the volunteer applicant.
- Take time to jot down notes while the interview is still fresh in your mind. (See sample Volunteer Interview Record form in this section)

■ Follow-up with acceptance/
placement, rejection, or referrals as
soon possible.

■ Have all selected volunteers
complete the Volunteer Service
Agreement, (copy included in this
section) even if the job only lasts a
few hours. Refer to *150 FW 2.2B*.⁵

■ Have all volunteers under age
18 complete a Parental Approval
Form (copy included in this section.)
Check with the State's employment
agency ahead of time to see if your
State requires a work permit for
volunteers. Refer to *150 FW 2.1B*
and *150 FW 2.2C*.⁶

⁵ *150 FW 2.2B Volunteer Services Agreement*

This agreement is signed by the individual
volunteer and a representative of the Service
office. An agreement must be signed before
projects are initiated, even for projects of only
a few hours duration. A separate job
description detailing each volunteer's or
group's responsibilities and time
commitments, as well as any responsibilities
or commitments made by the Service office,
should be attached to the agreement. The
document can be modified at any time by
mutual agreement and, at all times, must
accurately reflect the volunteer's duties. This
is important in case of questions concerning
injuries or liabilities. A copy of the agreement,
with any revisions or amendments, must be
given to the volunteer.

⁶ *150 FW 2.1B Age*

Although no minimum age requirement exists
for volunteers; field, Regional, and
Washington offices should comply with
appropriate Federal and State laws and
standards on using the services of minors. If
questions arise about the application of labor
laws, the Regional personnel office, Regional
safety manager, and local State employment
service office should be contacted for
information. No maximum age limitation
exists.

150 FW 2.2C Parental Approval Form

All volunteers under the age of 18 must obtain
written permission to perform volunteer
activities from their parent or guardian.
Signed parental approval forms should be
kept on file at the Service office with the
Volunteer Service Agreement for three years
after the volunteer's duty terminates. Service
staff should check with the State employment
agency to determine whether volunteers
under 18 also need a work permit from the
State. In some cases, it may also be necessary
to obtain additional parental approval for
special situations, such as participation in
certain Lyme Disease blood testing programs.
The unit supervisor should coordinate this
aspect of the program with the servicing
Regional safety manager.

Sample



United States Department of the Interior

BOSQUE DEL APACHE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

P.O. Box 1246
Socorro, New Mexico 87801

Dear Prospective Volunteer:

Thank you for your interest in our volunteer program. We are proud of our volunteers and the work that they accomplish. With the outstanding help of our volunteers, the Bosque has achieved recognition as one of the premier wildlife refuges in the nation.

Our 57,191 acre refuge is centered along the Rio Grande River floodplain in the foothills of the northern Chihuahuan Desert about 95 miles south of Albuquerque. Views are expansive and wildlife phenomenal. Winter daytime temperatures can be a pleasant 50 or 60; summers warm and dry.

Our volunteers are integrated into our programs and projects to work side-by-side with our employees and are normally scheduled for five 8 hour days. You will receive a stipend of \$10.00 for each 8 hours worked. During our busiest season (November 1st though February 28th) we require a minimum stay of 4 months. During this time, you could be scheduled to work additional hours and you may be asked to periodically change your days off.

Our RV sites are level with the scenic views. The Visitors Center and staff/volunteer lounge (complete with TV, commercial-size kitchen and free laundry) are just steps away. All RV sites have full hook-ups including electric and propane and are telephone-ready. TV reception (to access several local channels) is via a hook-up to our antenna. We also provide convenient, shared storage sheds. Very limited apartment housing is available.

The small town of San Antonio (8 miles) offers a post office, 2 cafes, limited groceries, and gas. The town of Socorro (18 miles), population 9,000, is a full-service community and many cultural events are presented at the local university. With an abundance of public lands, the area offers unlimited outdoor recreation.

Please complete all sections of the enclosed application(s). Be sure to give particular attention to the section regarding your education, interests, and work/volunteer experience. We receive many applications and this information will help us select the right volunteer for the right job.

If we have a volunteer opportunity for you, we know you will enjoy our extraordinary Bosque where more than 120,000 visitors, and at least that many avian guests, seek refuge.

Very truly yours,

Laurie Rosenthal,
Outdoor Recreation Planner

Sample



Volunteer Application for Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge



(please type or print)

Today's Date:

Revised 2/97

1. Name (Last, First, Middle):	2. Birth Date (optional):	3. Telephone(s): () - () -
4. Street Address and/or P.O. Box:	5. City, State, and Zip Code:	

Please check the volunteer position you are interested in:

6. **FIELD MAINTENANCE VOLUNTEER-** Please check your primary areas of interest:

- Maintenance/Construction.** Assists the Maintenance Staff in carpentry, plumbing, painting, grounds keeping, and other construction and labor tasks.
- Heavy Equipment Operator.** Operates diverse equipment such as dozers, farm tractors, excavators, loaders, ditch witch, Bobcat, rollers, dump trucks, water trucks, etc. depending on season and projects.
- Automotive/Heavy Equipment Mechanics Assistant.** Assists the Automotive Mechanic in servicing and maintaining the refuge vehicles and heavy equipment.

7. **SERVICES MAINTENANCE VOLUNTEER/ NATURALIST-** Maintenance of Visitor Center, restrooms, tour loop, campgrounds, trails; check/clean porta-restrooms; check/repair signs; minor deck repairs; landscape work. In spare time, staff observation decks and interact with public.

8. **VISITOR SERVICE VOLUNTEER-** You will be trained to perform some or all of the following Visitor Services. Special Note: When possible, you will be assigned to duties in your primary areas of interest. However, this in no way implies that you will only be assigned to those duties. Please check your primary areas of interest.

- Staff the Visitor Center reception desk (includes gift shop sales)
- Staff the Tour Loop fee booth (includes collecting money and answering questions)
- Naturalist Guide for group tours of all ages - (80% children, 20% adults)
- Roving Naturalist - nature interpretation for visitors on Tour Loop observation decks
- Present nature and outreach programs at schools
- Conduct nature/birding workshops

(continued on next page)

(Visitor Services Volunteer Continued)

- Conduct refuge orientations for Visitor Center groups
- Assist with special events including festivals and celebrations
- Perform office duties including typing, word processing, filing, and answering phones
- Light cleaning and maintenance of Visitor Center and restrooms
- Landscape work including light maintenance at headquarters such as mowing, trimming, weeding, watering, and maintenance of watering system
- Maintenance of Tour Loop, campground, and trails - pick up trash, check/clean porta-restrooms, check and repair signs, light repairs to Observation desks
- Clean interior/exterior, refuel, check oil, tires, etc. of public-use vehicles

YES, I understand that I will be expected to perform any of the services listed above as needed, within my physical limitations (please list limitations in Section #14)

8A. Visitor Services Volunteers may also be asked to work on special projects. Please check the areas that interest you:

- Volunteer Logistics Coordinator* - meet with potential volunteers to explain volunteer opportunities and benefits; orient new volunteers; assist the Outdoor Recreation Planner with public relations and special events; coordinate volunteer logistics; maintain volunteer statistics
- Artist* - design and illustrate brochures, flyers, guides, teaching packets, and interpretive signs
- Interpretive Writer* - write text for brochures, flyers, guides, interpretive signs and other publications; research information for accurate descriptions; provide direction for conceptual design of educational nature guides and teaching handbooks
- Marketing Specialist* - generate ongoing public relations including news releases, ad layout and design, community contact, etc. regarding the importance of the Refuge, special programs, festivals and other events
- Merchandising Assistant* - assist Friends of the Bosque in coordinating duties related to the Visitor Center's book and gift shop
- Fee Coordinator* - prepare fee booth money boxes, count fees and post in ledger
- Computer Specialist* - prepare forms, graphs, brochures, flyers, posters, etc.

9. Please write a brief statement regarding you experience/ education/ skills/ talent and/ or the reasons for your interest in each of the volunteer positions that you checked in #6, #7, and #8 /8A:

10. Anything else that you would like to share such as past work history, hobbies, interests, or education?

11. If you have computer skills, please describe:

12. Would you prefer to work: indoors outdoors both
 independently on a team both

13. Do you have a valid driver's license? Yes No State: _____

14. Please specify any physical limitations that may influence your volunteer work activities:

15. Specify your lodging requirements:

- I will need apartment housing.
- I will require a trailer pad for my recreational vehicle (please complete #15A)
- I do not need assistance with housing.

Pets In Household: _____
(note that all pets must be leashed or penned and supervised when outdoors)

15 A. Our RV Community is level, graveled, circular area with scenic views. The Visitors Center, staff/volunteer lounge, and laundry are just steps away. All 15 pads have water, sewer, electric (10 with 30/50 amps, 5 with 30 amps), and are telephone-ready. TV reception, limited to several local channels, is via a hook-up to our antenna.

Pads are assigned on a first-come basis and/or size requirements. The following information will help us assign a comfortable location.

I/We own a: Motorhome Travel Trailer 5th Wheel Other

Length _____ ft. Amps Required _____ Slide Out(s) Yes No How many? _____

Towed or tow vehicle (car, truck, van, etc.): _____

Other Equipment (trailer, boat, pet pen, etc.): _____

Special Requirements:

16. Dates that you are available: From- _____ To- _____

During this time frame, list any dates you expect to be unavailable (holidays, family obligations, etc.)

17. Which days of the week would you be available? (circle) S M Tu W Th F Sat

18. Please list your last two supervisors (paid or volunteer work):

Name and Title	Address	Phone

Notice to Volunteer

Volunteers are not considered to be Federal employees for any purposes other than tort claims and injury compensation. Volunteer service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other benefits. However, volunteer service is creditable work experience.

Privacy Act Statement

The following information is provided to comply with the Privacy Act (PL 93-579). 5 U.S.C. 301 and 7 CFR260 authorize acceptance of the information requested on this form. The data will be used to contact applicants and to interview, screen, and select them for volunteer assignments. Furnishing this data is voluntary.

19. Signature (sign in ink): _____

Date: _____

Sample Volunteer Interview Record

Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

Name of Volunteer: _____ Phone: _____

I. Review of Enrollment Form

Review and clarify information on Volunteer Enrollment Form. Correct any misinformation on form and place other comments below.

II. Non-Directive Interview Questions

1. What attracted you to our agency? Is there any aspect of our work that most motivates you to seek to volunteer here?

2. What would you like to get out of volunteering here? What would make you feel like you've been successful?

3. What have you enjoyed most about your previous volunteer work? About previous paid employment?

4. Describe your ideal supervisor. What sort of supervisory style do you prefer to work under?

5. Would you rather work on your own, with a group, or with a partner? Why?

6. What skills do you feel you have to contribute?

7. What can I tell you about our agency?

III. Match with Volunteer Positions

Discuss potential volunteer positions and check match of interests, qualifications, and availability.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

To be completed after interview

IV. Interviewer Assessment

Appearance:

Poised, neat

Acceptable

Unkempt

Reactions to Questions:

Helpful, interested, volunteered information

Answers questions

Evasive

Confused

Disposition:

Outgoing, pleasant, confident

Reserved

Withdrawn, moody

Suspicious, antagonistic

Interpersonal Skills:

Adept at dealing with others

Relatively at ease with others

Uncomfortable

Physical Restrictions:

V. Recommended Action

Consider for following positions:

1. _____

2. _____

Schedule for second interview with _____

Hold in reserve for position of:

1. _____

2. _____

Investigate further: _____

Refer to: _____

Not suitable for agency at this time

**Volunteer Services Agreement between
The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Department of the Interior and**

(Name of Individual, Group or Educational Institution)

Address: _____
_____ Phone: _____

Responsibilities

The volunteer and the Service will cooperate in the completion of projects specified below and in the attached volunteer job description. Volunteer conduct will be governed by the Department of the Interior Regulations Governing Responsibilities and Conduct. The Service will provide appropriate supervision, training and equipment for the volunteer for the completion of work assignments.

Service Unit and Location: _____

Supervisor: _____

Dates of volunteer service: From _____ to _____

*Specific training: _____

*Personal equipment required: _____

*Reimbursable Expenses: _____

(*If not applicable, indicate N/A)

The volunteer (will/will not) _____ be required to supply his/her own transportation while performing assigned volunteer services.

The Government (will/will not) _____ supply housing.

Special Provisions

Tort Claims. For the purposes of the tort claim provisions in Title 28 of the U.S. Code, volunteers covered by this Agreement are considered to be Federal employees.

Injury Compensation. For the purpose of Subchapter I of Chapter 81 of Title 5 of the U.S. Code, volunteers covered by this Agreement are considered to be employees of the United States in terms of eligibility for compensation due to work related injuries.

Prohibited Activities. volunteers will not be assigned active law enforcement duties or other duties restricted by permit or Service regulations or standards.

It is understood that volunteers are NOT considered to be Federal employees for any purposes other than tort claims and injury compensation. Volunteer service is not creditable for leave accrual or any other employee benefits.

Termination

This Agreement may be terminated by mutual agreement or by either party provided at least five working days notice is given.

Approved

_____ Date: _____
(Individual Volunteer or Group Representative)

_____ Date: _____
(Educational Institution Representative)
(if applicable)

_____ Date: _____
(Volunteer Coordinator or Supervisor)

Date of termination of volunteer service: _____

Check here if an evaluation of volunteer work is desired.

Please identify any physical or mental condition (including allergies and medication you are taking) which might affect your performance or which should be brought to the attention of the Fish and Wildlife Service to enable them to treat you in an emergency situation. Disclosure of this information will not disqualify you from volunteer service. (e.g., Are you a diabetic or epileptic; are you allergic to insect bites, chemicals, poison ivy, other?)

Name of person to contact in case of emergency _____

Address _____

Telephone No. (including area code) _____ home _____ office

Relation to you (e.g., mother, father, friend) _____

United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service

Parental Approval Form

Name of volunteer _____ Age _____

Parent or guardian's name _____

Address _____

Phone: (residence) _____ (business) _____

I affirm that I am the parent/guardian of the above-named volunteer. I understand that the Fish and Wildlife Service's Volunteer Program does not provide compensation, except as otherwise provided by law. The Services will not confer on the volunteer the status of a Federal employee. I have read the attached project description explaining the type of work to be performed with the

(Name of supervising organization, if applicable)

at _____ from _____ to _____
(name of office or field station) (date) (date)

I give my permission for _____ to participate in this program.

(Signature of parent or guardian)

(Date)

IV. Orientation and Training

A. Orientation

Most volunteers, even those who bring specific skills and knowledge to the job(s) they will do, require some orientation to acquaint them with the Fish and Wildlife Service and the respective field station where they are volunteering. The orientation can be as simple or complex as you want to make it. Orientation consists of the planned introduction of volunteers to pertinent information about the field station.

1. Ideas for a Volunteer Orientation Packet

- Welcome letter from project leader
- List of staff and titles
- Field station organization chart
- Photo(s) of staff
- Floor plan of headquarters, visitor center, offices, emergency procedures
- Station leaflets and species list
- Field station fact sheet
- Items of special interest or importance to the site
- Information on the cooperative association/Friends group, or concessions
- Laminated wallet card with important phone numbers and procedures
- Map of the station, including buildings, grounds, and roads
- Glossary of terms used at the station (e.g., “Bio Tech,” “Moist Soil,” “AUM,” “DNC,” “YCC”)

- *Volunteer Orientation Checklist* (see sample in this section)

- *Volunteer time log* (see samples in this section)

- Information regarding tax deductions for volunteers. Refer to *150 FW 3.5B*⁷ and IRS publication 526 “Charitable Contributions.”

- The Balance of Rights and Responsibilities between Volunteers and Paid Staff (see sample in this section)

- Volunteer Feedback form (see sample in this section)

B. Training

No volunteer should be thrown into the job “cold”; everyone should at least be provided with essential training to perform the tasks they have been assigned to do as volunteers. The Service can pay for the training of volunteers in the same manner in which training is paid for regular employees. Use standard Training Form (SF182). Volunteers attending National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) courses are NOT considered as employees and tuition is required. This tuition may be paid by any Service office/station. Some examples where training is needed are listed below.

- Telephone/radio procedures

- Tour of the field station

- Use of government equipment, including vehicles

- Timekeeping

- Uniform policy/dress code

- Safety awareness/emergency procedures

- Special training may be required for certain positions

NOTE: Hazardous duties require specialized training and awareness by the volunteer of the hazards involved. A statement describing the hazardous duty should be part of the Volunteer Agreement. Refer to *150 FW 1.8B(2)*.⁸

⁷ *150 FW 3.5B Travel and Other Expenses*

Volunteers may be permitted to deduct unreimbursed expenses (local transportation, meals, travel expenses, lodging, supplies, and a mileage rate allowed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for the operation of a personal automobile for volunteer work) as a deductible contribution on Federal income tax returns. The IRS sets an annual ceiling on the percentum level of volunteer expenses which can be claimed. A copy of the Volunteer Services Agreement should be retained by the volunteer and may be used to support this claim. IRS booklet #526, “Charitable Contributions” provides information on this subject and is available from IRS taxpayer assistance offices.

⁸ *150 FW 1.8B. Prohibited Volunteer Services*

(2) Volunteers will not be used in certain hazardous jobs, such as firefighting and operating heavy equipment, unless they have completed the appropriate Federal training. Individuals who meet fire qualification requirements (see 232 FW 6 or 6 RM 7.13) may be hired as emergency firefighters on a DI 530, Emergency Employment and Time Sheet, available from the regional office. Once hired, these individuals are no longer considered volunteers.

The use of volunteers for other jobs that involve safety considerations must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the volunteer’s training to perform such work. Special care must be exercised when utilizing volunteers under 18 years of age. In these cases, provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, as it addresses child labor, apply. A Job Hazard Analysis should be developed for all hazardous activities in accordance with guidance provided in 240 FW 2, and for any activity for which an injury or accident has been reported (see 240 FW 7). When the analysis requires operational and safety training or equipment, the volunteer will not perform the job until all training is completed, the supervisor knows the volunteer’s work capability, the volunteer understands the job and its hazards, and appropriate equipment is supplied.

Volunteer Orientation Checklist

Volunteer Orientation Checklist

Name of Volunteer: _____ Start Date: _____

Initial *Date*

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | Review Signed Volunteer Agreement |
| _____ | _____ | Review Position Description and Individual Schedules |
| _____ | _____ | Discuss Subsistence Payment (If applicable) |
| _____ | _____ | Explain Reimbursement for Expenses Procedures |
| _____ | _____ | Explain/Handout Volunteer Hours Log |
| _____ | _____ | Explain Uniforms/Dress Code |
| _____ | _____ | Complete Property Form (Keys, Equipment, if applicable) |
| _____ | _____ | Explain Housing (if applicable) |
| _____ | _____ | Quarters Inventory (if applicable) |
| _____ | _____ | Assign Mail Box (if applicable) |
| _____ | _____ | Explain Office Phone Procedures |
| _____ | _____ | Discuss Radio Usage (if applicable) |
| _____ | _____ | Discuss Vehicle Usage (if applicable) |
| _____ | _____ | Review/Hand Out Safety Items (Gloves, Boots, Hard Hat, if applicable) |
| _____ | _____ | Explain Safety Procedures |
| _____ | _____ | Review Sensitive Area Limitations |
| _____ | _____ | Make Staff Introductions |
| _____ | _____ | Orient to Buildings and Grounds |

Please return this form to Field Station's Volunteer Coordinator.

The Balance of Rights and Responsibilities Between Volunteers and Paid Staff

The Volunteer Has

The Right To:

1. a job that is worthwhile and challenging.
2. be trusted with necessary confidential information.
3. be kept informed on what is happening in the organization.
4. expect that his/her tasks have been planned.
5. an assignment that will promote learning and growth.
6. orientation and training.
7. receive advice and support from a designated supervisor.
8. appropriate recognition even on a day-to-day basis.
9. be treated as a non-paid staff member.

The FWS Employee Has

The Right To:

1. decline any volunteer thought unsuitable.
2. expect that the volunteer will complete assignments accepted.
3. give instructions as to how the work is to be done.
4. evaluate the volunteer's performance
5. report problems and progress to person who coordinates volunteers.
6. schedule volunteers when work space is available.
7. own opinion on the merit of volunteer involvement.

The Responsibility To:

- know his/her limits
- respect confidences
- follow organizational guidelines
- prepare for each work assignment
- use time wisely; not interfere with other's performance
- acknowledge the need for training and participate fully
- consult with the supervisor when unclear on policy or action
- give constructive feedback that will improve effectiveness
- work as a team member

The Responsibility To:

- make all necessary qualifications known ahead of time
- provide for adequate time and training for each assignment
- make sure the volunteer understands the task
- set and maintain standards
- keep good communication with volunteer program coordinator
- provide adequate, pleasant work space
- not overgeneralize about volunteers

Volunteer Feedback Form

Attention Volunteers We Need Your Feedback

Your feedback and advice will help us maintain the best possible volunteer program. Here are a few questions for you to consider during your time as a volunteer. We would appreciate your responses to these questions during or after your volunteer service. Please complete this evaluation form and return it to the Volunteer Coordinator. We encourage your responses to these questions and welcome any additional comments or suggestions you may have about the volunteer program.

- | | Yes | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Did you feel you had enough input regarding your job selection and placement? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Was your job description accurate/adequate? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Did your orientation provide a basic introduction to the FWS and the field station, their purpose, and how they function? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. Did you feel the job utilized your talents and satisfied your reasons for volunteering? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Did the paid staff acknowledge and appreciate your volunteer contributions? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. Did you feel adequate supervision, time and energy was available to you? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Was your time as a volunteer a worthwhile experience for you? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

What would you suggest for improving the volunteer program?

V. Protection and Benefits

It is the policy of the Fish and Wildlife Service that all volunteer activities be conducted in a safe and healthful manner. Prudent judgement in this area is a must. This information is important both in the administration of the volunteer program and as orientation information for the volunteer. For further guidance on safety issues please contact your Regional Safety Office.

A. Volunteer Safety

The rules and regulations that apply to employee safety also apply to volunteers. Volunteers should be treated as employees with regard to required training, safety procedures, and equipment. For example, before beginning an assigned job, volunteers will have completed all training required of Service employees for that job.

A safety orientation, including field station or office policies, rules, regulations and emergency procedures, will be provided to volunteers. In addition, they will receive instruction on safe working procedures and hazards related to their job assignments and will be issued the necessary protective equipment to perform that job.

A volunteer must be qualified for any hazardous duty assignment and there must be a statement of the job hazards included in the signed Volunteer Service Agreement. A minimum age of 18 is required for hazardous duty assignments in accordance with the Department Manual, 485 DM. Also refer to 150 FW 1.8B(2) and 150 1.8C.⁹

B. Injury Compensation and Tort Claims Protection

Volunteers are considered “employees” for the purposes of injury compensation and tort claims protection. Refer to 150 FW 2.1D¹⁰, 228 FW 1, and 401 FW 3. Contact

your Regional Safety or Personnel Office for assistance.

C. Drivers License

Volunteers under the age of 18 may not operate any motor vehicles or power equipment. *Volunteers are not authorized to operate private vehicles in the performance of duty for the Service. Refer to 150 FW 3.4¹¹ and 321 FW 1 for specific guidance.* Volunteers 18 years of age or older may be permitted to operate motor vehicles and power equipment if they possess a valid State vehicle operator’s license and have received all of the training required and appropriate to the equipment assigned to them. Volunteers can also be authorized to use the vehicle

⁹ 150 FW 1.8 B. Prohibited Volunteer Services

(2) Volunteers will not be used in certain hazardous jobs, such as firefighting and operating heavy equipment, unless they have completed the appropriate Federal training. Individuals who meet fire qualification requirements (see 232 FW 6 or 6 RM 7.13) may be hired as emergency firefighters on a DI 530. Emergency Employment and Time Sheet, available from the regional office. Once hired, these individuals are no longer considered volunteers.

The use of volunteers for other jobs that involve safety considerations must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the volunteer’s training to perform such work. Special care must be exercised when utilizing volunteers under 18 years of age. In these cases, provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, as it addresses child labor, apply. A Job Hazard Analysis should be developed for all hazardous activities in accordance with guidance provided in 240 FW 2, and for any activity for which an injury or accident has been reported (see 240 FW 7). When the analysis requires operational and safety training or equipment, the volunteer will not perform the job until all training is completed, the supervisor knows the volunteer’s work capability, the volunteer understands the job and its hazards, and appropriate equipment is supplied.

150 FW 1.8C Safety and Health Considerations

All Departmental and Service safety and health policies apply to volunteer activities. Additional information on occupational safety and health may be found in the FWM, Parts 240-242.

credit card when needed. Your field station may want to have some sort of authorization form to operate a government vehicle. A sample of one field station’s authorization form is located at the end of this chapter.

D. Travel

On occasion, volunteers will be required to travel to temporary sites to conduct official business/volunteer activities. Volunteers that travel will require a Travel Authorization (trip-by-trip) and will be reimbursed by submitting a Travel Voucher. The procedures and policy for authorization and reimbursement are treated the same as an employee. (Reference 150 FW 3.5B, 265 FW, and the Federal Travel Regulations 301.)

¹⁰ 150 FW 2.1D Status

Conduct of volunteers while in a volunteer status is governed by Department of the Interior Regulations Governing Responsibilities and Conduct, which is available from the servicing personnel office. Service volunteers are not considered to be Federal employees for any purpose other than:

(1) Federal tort claims provisions published in 28 U.S.C. 2671 through 2680. Claims arising as a result of volunteer participation should be referred to the Regional tort claims officer (see 401 FW or 20 AM 5).

(2) Title 5 U.S.C. Chapter 81 (Federal Employees Compensation Act), dealing with compensation for injuries sustained during the performance of work assignments. Guidelines on processing injuries sustained during the performance of work assignments. Guidelines on processing injury compensation claims are available from the servicing personnel office. For all work-related injuries, a form DI 134, Report of Accident Incident, must be submitted in accordance with 240 FW 7 (24 AM 1.13).

¹¹ 150 FW 3.4 Motorized Vehicle and Equipment Operation

Volunteers who possess a valid State driver’s license may operate Government sedans and light duty vehicles. Issuance of a U.S. Government Vehicle Operator’s Identification Card (OF-346) is optional. Operation of specialized equipment or heavy duty vehicles requires compliance with policies and guidelines provided in 242 FW 2.

E. Housing

Field stations can provide trailer pads with electric and water hookups for volunteers. Volunteers may occupy government housing, and in special cases be provided rental housing at the discretion of the Project Leader (Refer to *150 FW 3.3.*)¹²

F. Reimbursement of Expenses

The Fish and Wildlife Service has the authority to reimburse volunteers for incidental expenses incurred as a result of their volunteer service contributions. Service policy is contained in *150 FW 3.5(A)*¹³ and Public Law 95-616 allowing for the reimbursement of expenses such as transportation, uniforms, lodging and subsistence. Project leaders should use discretion in the authorization of volunteer reimbursements. The kinds of expenses to be reimbursed and the rate of reimbursement should be specified in the volunteer services agreement.

Conduct of volunteers while in the volunteer status is governed by Department of the Interior Volunteers may be reimbursed from station imprest funds or by U.S. Treasury checks as follows:

1. Reimbursement from Imprest Fund

The preferred method for reimbursement of authorized volunteer out-of-pocket expenses is via submission of an SF-1164, "Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business," and the necessary receipts. The SF-1164 should reference the Volunteer Services Agreement, a copy of which should be sent to the Finance Center for inclusion in the Cashier's file. (Approved out-of-pocket expenses related to local transportation [see above] are generally claimed via an SF-1164.)

2. Reimbursement by Treasury Check

Reimbursement for travel-related expenses (official travel and/or subsistence) are always paid by treasury check. Claims are submitted in the same manner as for regular employees, except that a copy of the Volunteer Services Agreement must accompany the document. The daily subsistence rate, if applicable, should be specified in the Travel Authorization.

Itemized non-travel related claims, (too large, for example, to be paid from the station imprest fund), should be submitted on an approved SF-1164, accompanied by receipts and a copy of the Volunteer Services Agreement. Such claims may be in addition to, or separate from, travel-related claims.

G. Uniforms

This section is most applicable to offices where Service volunteers are in contact with the visiting public such as at refuges and hatcheries. On such stations, volunteer training should include orientation to specific station policy on volunteer uniforms.

1. Service Policy:

■ Volunteers are not permitted to wear official Service uniforms or be dressed in a manner that attempts to duplicate the appearance of the Service uniform. Refer to *150 FW 3.2.*¹⁴ Volunteers must be easily recognized as volunteers by the visiting public.

■ There should be an obvious visual distinction between paid employees and volunteers. The volunteer uniform shall match the blue color of the volunteer cap or patch as closely as possible.

■ R&R Uniforms, Inc., is the sole authorized provider of certain volunteer uniform components. A station may procure volunteer uniform components from other vendors only if they are not available through R&R. Check with R&R Uniforms, Inc., prior to ordering volunteer components. They have added several new items to their catalog as shown on the most recent catalog insert included in this section.

■ Uniform components should be consistent on a given station.

■ The uniform must reflect favorably upon the Service.

■ The uniform must be appropriate and/or functional for the tasks involved.

2. *Approved Uniform Components (available through R&R Uniforms catalog):*

- Volunteer ID pin (name tag)
- Unisex Vest

- Cardigan Sweater
- Cap (Mesh or Twill)
- Windbreaker
- Short-sleeve knit shirt
- Volunteer patch (both small and large)

3. *Optional Uniform Components:*

- Volunteer belt buckle
- Volunteer pin

¹² *150 FW 3.3 Housing*

Volunteers are permitted to occupy Government housing at no expense to the volunteer when:

A. Housing is available.

B. When they are not displacing a Government employee; and

C. The volunteer's work is important enough and of sufficient duration to make provision of housing cost-effective for the Service.

In special cases, such as for SCA participants or for volunteers with special skills that are not locally available, housing may be rented by the project leader at a reasonable cost and provided to the volunteer. Payment may be made using a purchase order.

¹³ *150 FW 3.5 Travel and Other Expenses*

A. The decision to reimburse or not to reimburse travel and other incidental expenses, as well as the amount of reimbursement, will be made by the project leader. The kind and amount of reimbursement will be specified in the Volunteer Service Agreement. Any changes in reimbursement will be documented as an amendment to the agreement.

Service volunteers may be paid for transportation and per diem expenses that are clearly and directly related to Service work assignments. Payment is made in the same manner as for regular employees.

Payment of travel and per diem expenses to a volunteer on a particular assignment must be supported by a specific travel authorization and cannot exceed the cost of employing a temporary employee of comparable qualification at the work site. For example, payment of travel expenses for a field trip for a volunteer from the continental United States to Hawaii would be inappropriate compared to use of a local, temporary appointee or a volunteer in the local area.

¹⁴ *150 FW 3.2 Uniforms and Patches*

Volunteers are not permitted to wear official Service uniforms or be dressed in a manner that attempts to duplicate the appearance of the Service uniform (041 FW 4). Volunteers must be easily recognized as volunteers by the visiting public. Where volunteer uniform components are worn, the project leader shall issue components that are consistent and that match the blue color of the volunteer cap or patch as closely as possible. Volunteers may be allowed to keep the patch, though this could become a costly policy for the office. Thus it is recommended that project leaders require that patches be returned upon termination of volunteer services, particularly in the case of short-term volunteers.

U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

FY 99 - SPECIAL PURPOSE ORDER FORM FOR STATION USE ONLY

Prices Effective 10-1-98
PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY
Special Instructions:

Date Of Order _____ ORG. CODE: _____

Station Name _____

Billing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Station Phone # () _____

Station FAX # () _____

Shipping Address: (If different than Billing Address)

LOT#	DESCRIPTION	SIZE	QTY	PRICE	EXTENSION
740	FLASHLIGHT/BATON RING			6.41	
750	KEY HOLDER			9.16	
7413	STEEL TOE WORK BOOT, MALE			95.31	
7414	STEEL TOE WORK BOOT, FEMALE			90.08	
610	OFFICER CREDENTIAL CASE			25.40	
801	FIRE-CREW T-SHIRT - 100% COTTON RED			8.26	
460	YCC YOUTH LEADER BALL CAP			7.42	
450	YCC BASEBALL CAP			7.25	
1515	BOAT SHOE, MALE			50.02	
1516	BOAT SHOE, FEMALE			46.19	
	VOLUNTEER ITEMS				
381	MESH VOLUNTEER CAP			8.45	
380	TWILL VOLUNTEER CAP			8.81	
1600	KNIT SHIRT			21.46	
125	WINDBREAKER			21.72	
2906	SWEATER			26.01	
1613	VEST			13.13	
375	EMBLEM - SMALL			2.53	
370	EMBLEM - LARGE			3.63	
319	ID PIN			10.77	
ORDER TOTAL					

**SEND ALL
ORDERS TO
R&R UNIFORMS INC.**

P.O. BOX 27004
Nashville TN 37202-7004
FAX: 615-248-3437

QUESTIONS
Phone: 1-800-545-6590

**PLEASE CHECK METHOD OF PAYMENT (ONLY ONE)
*ALLOWANCE USAGE NOT PERMITTED**

Government Impac Card 3rd Party Draft Check Money Order

Please print your ENTIRE
credit card number _____

Card Expiration Date: ____/____/____

Name of Card Holder: _____

PRICE FIRM THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 1999

98143



U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

VOLUNTEER



UNISEX KNIT SHIRT \$21.25

AVAILABLE NOW

- 100% cotton
- Fashion collar
- Extended tail with side vents
- Welt cuff
- Two-button placket
- FWS Volunteer embroidered logo on left breast

Unisex Knit Shirt #1600

ORDER SIZE	S	M	L	XL	XXL	XXXL
CHEST	34-36	38-40	42-44	46-48	50-52	54-56



UNISEX VEST \$13.00

AVAILABLE NOW

- 50% cotton, 50% polyester
- Straight non-tapered styling
- 2 lower front patch pockets
- Small FWS Volunteer emblem on left breast

Unisex Vest #1613

ORDER SIZE	S	M	L	XL	XXL	XXXL
CHEST	34-36	35-40	42-44	46-48	50-52	54-56



WINDBREAKER \$21.50

AVAILABLE NOW

- Nylon single-ply, Taffeta, Flannel Cotton Lining, Water-Repellent
- Hip length
- Storm welt slash pockets
- Rust-proof snaps & Drawstring
- FWS Volunteer emblem on left sleeve

Windbreaker #125

ORDER SIZE	XS	S	M	L	XL	XXL	XXXL
CHEST	32-34	36-38	40-42	44-46	48-50	52-54	56-58



CARDIGAN SWEATER \$25.75

AVAILABLE NOW

- 100% acrylic
- 6 button front
- Ribbed cuff
- FWS Volunteer emblem on left sleeve

Cardigan Sweater #2906

ORDER SIZE	S	M	L	XL	XXL
CHEST	38-41	42-44	45-47	48-50	52-54

Small Volunteer Emblem #375 \$2.50
2 7/8" x 2 1/4"

Large Volunteer Emblem #370 \$3.59
3 1/2" x 3 1/2"

Volunteer ID Pin #319 \$10.66
(Last name and full first name or first initial)



CUSTOMER SERVICE (800) 545-6590 ▼ FAX (615) 248-3437

98067

Sample

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Bosque Del Apache National Wildlife Refuge

Authorization for Operation of Government-Owned Vehicle

_____ is hereby authorized to operate the
(Name)
following classes of vehicles: cars ____, light trucks ____, vans ____, other (specify) _____
in the course of carrying out official duties assigned through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Bosque
del Apache National Wildlife Refuge.

_____ has been advised and by signature hereto
(Name)
agrees to notify their current driver's license becomes suspended, revoked, canceled, or they have become
otherwise disqualified from holding a valid state driver's license.

This authorization is issued for a period not to exceed _____ (4 year maximum) from the date of
signature and may be canceled at any time in writing by the current supervisor.

_____ Signature of Applicant	_____ Date
_____ Signature of Supervisor	_____ Date

Place Driver's License Here to Photocopy

VI. Supervision and Recognition

A. Supervision

Supervising volunteers requires the ability to be sensitive to volunteers' strong points as well as to their faults, and the ability to work with various personalities until the job is done.

Give clear and concise instructions. Always make sure that the volunteer understands the instructions. Emphasize any special precautions and safety procedures. Provide written instruction if necessary. Have a trained employee work with the volunteer until the job is well learned. Make sure that the volunteer has the right equipment and materials to get the job done.

1. Provide a good working environment

- Provide a stable, personal work space
- Provide a comfortable working climate
- Maintain safe and healthy working conditions
- Promote smiles from paid staff
- Provide a coffee area with places to sit down
- Defend against hostile staff
- Recognize and accommodate personal needs and preferences such as for hearing/sight and mobile disabilities
- Offer flexible work opportunities
- Allow job sharing

2. Evaluation

Volunteers are entitled to evaluations of their performance (refer to *150 FW 3.6A*¹⁵ and *Form FWS 3-2088 "Volunteer Evaluation"* at the end of this section).

B. Recognition

All people, whether paid employees or volunteers, want and need to have their efforts acknowledged. To a volunteer, your appreciation appears more genuine when it is done on a daily basis and not reserved for the annual volunteer appreciation program. You will notice also that your staff's approach to volunteer recognition will influence how long volunteers stay at your station. People tend to remain active

longer at a place where they feel their help is appreciated, their time is well used, and where they enjoy themselves. Effective recognition of volunteers will increase the efficiency of your volunteer program. (See sample of hrs/award.)

■ Timing is crucial, time delays weaken the impact of most awards. An immediate "thank you" or "great job" is much more important than a proclamation six months later. Have several recognition and reward options available.*

■ Tailor your recognition to the unique needs and interests of the people involved. Deliver recognition in a personal and honest manner.*

■ Remember that recognition is the art of catching people doing good, and then of helping them feel good about what they have done.*

1. National Volunteer Week

By Presidential Proclamation, the third week in April is "National Volunteer Week." This is an excellent occasion to focus media and public attention on the activities of your volunteer program and to recruit new volunteers.

- Hold an "Open House" showing examples of volunteer projects
- Provide volunteer "profiles" as feature stories for local papers
- Hold a volunteer banquet, pot luck or picnic, and include a slide show recounting the past year; present awards, certificates, etc.
- Co-sponsor a "Volunteer Fair" with volunteers from other organizations
- Set up a temporary volunteer exhibit at local shopping center
- Allow volunteers special opportunities not usually available (i.e., assisting with wildlife censuses in remote area via airboat)

* Courtesy of Rick Lynch and Steve McCurley.

¹⁵ *150 FW 3.6 Evaluation and Reports*

A. Evaluation of Volunteers.

Volunteers are entitled to an evaluation of their performance (using Evaluation Form FWS 3-2088, Volunteer Evaluation) by their supervisor upon termination of their service, completion of a major project, once every year (for volunteers whose services are long term), upon request. One copy of the evaluation will be given to the volunteer and one kept in Service office's files for 3 years. An evaluation is not required unless requested by the volunteer. One is also included in this handbook. Volunteer Evaluation form is available from the Regional Volunteer Coordinator.

National Volunteer Week is one way to recognize your volunteers. However, do not wait for this week; recognition of volunteers should be done daily, weekly, monthly, or as accomplishments are done (refer to *150 FW 3.7*).¹⁶

2. Suggested Ways to Recognize Volunteer Contributions

- Enlist to train other volunteers
- Nominate for special awards (except Volunteer of the Year)
- Ask for their advice
- Say “thank you” often
- Publish volunteer profiles in a local newspaper
- Post an “Honor Roll of Volunteers” in a public area of the station
- Plan social get-together
- Have a kickoff potluck (possibly with family)
- Offer flexible work opportunities
- Establish a suggestion box

¹⁶ *150 FW 3.7 Recognition and Appreciation*

Appropriate recognition and appreciation of volunteer contributions are especially important. Recognition and awards provided to volunteers should stay within the limit of approximately \$100. This does not mean that the volunteer who contributes an unusual number of hours and substantially benefits the Service cannot be given something beyond the \$100 value. Using good judgement and providing proper justification and documentation should allow for the flexibility needed to ensure an effective and successful volunteer program. Federal funds may be used to pay for award and recognition items such as T-shirts, mugs, wildlife art or books, or lunch/dinner for the volunteer(s) only.

Certificates of Appreciation are available from the Regional Volunteer Coordinator. These can be presented as appropriate during such occasions as luncheons, picnics, or similar gatherings. Local news media coverage of the volunteer program in general, with emphasis on special projects, or individuals, is an aid in recruiting and recognizing work well done. Day-to-day informal expressions of appreciation for jobs well done are perhaps the most effective means of letting people know they are valued. This simple but often neglected technique should be used generously.

- Offer/extend internal training opportunities
- Send letters of appreciation/commendation to employers
- Maintain meaningful, accurate records on volunteer services
- Provide job rotating opportunities
- Keep challenging them
- Invite to staff meetings

Volunteers are authorized to receive recognition materials and awards of nominal value. They may NOT receive cash awards until policy and guidance for implementation of the National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act of 1998 (P.L. 105-242), is in place. After this occurs this handbook will be updated to reflect the policies and procedures. Currently, there are nonmonetary awards that can be given in various categories related to volunteer service.

Certificates of appreciation which have been signed by the Fish and Wildlife Service Director and the Secretary of the Interior are available from the Regional Volunteer Coordinator. These certificates may be used to recognize volunteers who have made unusually outstanding or significant contributions. Some regions have designed volunteer certificates to be used within the region, please check with your Regional Volunteer Coordinator to see what options your region provides. Stations may also develop and award volunteers with locally designed certificates at the discretion of the project leader (several examples included in this section). Other examples of volunteer recognition items include volunteer hour pins, volunteer mugs, belt buckles, etc. Personalizing recognition makes it more meaningful to the volunteer.

Sample Award Scale

25 hours	■ mug
50 hours	■ patch and decal
100 hours	■ hat
200 hours	■ logo pin
300 hours	■ T-shirt
400 hours	■ lunch sack or tote bag
500 hours	■ logo pin with rocker
750 hours	■ quill pen with logo on pocket clip
1,000 hours	■ logo pin with rocker
1,500 hours	■ logo pin with rocker
2,000 hours	■ logo pin with rocker
2,080 hours	■ embroidered polo shirt (this is equivalent to one FTE)
2,500 hours	■ logo pin with rocker ■ choice of any logo items above (except polo shirt)
3,000 hours	■ logo pin with rocker
3,500 hours	■ logo pin with rocker ■ book store gift certificate
4,000 hours	■ logo pin with rocker ■ restaurant gift certificate
4,500 hours	■ compass
5,000 hours	■ logo pin with rocker
6,000 hours	■ logo pin with rocker
7,000 hours	■ logo pin with rocker
10,000 hours	■ logo pin with rocker

Sample



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

*Acknowledges with great appreciation
the significant contribution of
to the conservation and management
of our natural resources through their
volunteer service.*

Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Secretary of the Interior

Regional Director

Project Leader



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



*Acknowledges with great appreciation
the significant contribution of*

Name

*to the conservation and management
of our natural resources through
his volunteer services at
Tern Island, French Frigate Shoals,
Hawaiian Islands National Wildlife Complex*

Regional Director

Refuge Manager

Sample



Department of the Interior
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



Certificate of Volunteer Appreciation

Acknowledging the contribution of

*toward the conservation and management
of natural resources.*

Project Leader _____

Date _____



United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



Certificate of Volunteer Appreciation

Acknowledging the contribution of

*toward the conservation and management
of natural resources*

Project Leader _____

Date _____

Sample

United States
Department of the Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service

*Acknowledges with great appreciation
the significant contribution of*

*to the conservation and management of
our natural resources through volunteer service
at*

Regional Director

Project Leader





Department of the Interior
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



Certificate of Volunteer Appreciation

*Acknowledges with great appreciation
the significant contribution of*

*to the conservation and management of our
natural resources through dedicated volunteer service.*

Donald E. Lamberton

Regional Director, Northeast Region

Project Leader



Certificate of Recognition

Presented To

For volunteering

hours of your time to

We appreciate your outstanding contributions to the protection
of America's natural and cultural resources.

Date

Sample

Volunteer Evaluation

(To be completed by the volunteer's supervisor upon request of the volunteer at the end of a project, upon termination of the volunteer's tour of duty, or every six months for long term volunteers.)

1. Volunteer's Name _____

2. Supervisor's Name _____

3. Volunteer's Days of Service _____ to _____

4. Office or Field Station _____

5. Projects Completed _____

6. Were the projects completed to your expectations? If not, why? _____

7. Did the volunteer fulfill the criteria established in his/her project description? If not, what was not addressed?

8. What were the volunteer's major strengths in relation to the assigned volunteer duties?

9. What were the volunteer's weaknesses in relation to the assigned volunteer duties?

10. What were the major skills used by the volunteer to complete his/her duties and their proficiency in using these skills?

11. Additional Comments:

VII. Annual Volunteer Report

The annual volunteer report is compiled in the Washington office and distributed to Congressional members, Service and Departmental budget offices, conservation organizations (e.g., Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy, etc.), volunteer organizations, and others. The report is done through the Refuge Comprehensive Accomplishment Report (RCAR) and is due by October 15th of each year. Fisheries, Ecological Services, Law Enforcement, Regional and other offices will use the attached report form. These reports are due to your Regional Volunteer Coordinator by October 31st. The Volunteer Services Report form is included at the end of this section, refer to *150 FW 3.6B*¹⁷ for further guidance.

Note: Due to the cross-program nature of the volunteer program and changes in reporting Systems there are currently discrepancies between the FWS Manual and reporting dates. Refuges are to report through RCARS, all others are to report using current methods.

¹⁷ 150 FW 3.6B Annual Reports

(1) Unit Volunteer Coordinator will submit Form 3-2089 (Volunteer Services Report) to the Regional Volunteer Coordinator by December 31 of each year. This form is available from the Regional Volunteer Coordinator. One is also included in this handbook.

(2) Regional Volunteer Coordinators will send a summary of the data submitted by their offices and Regional Office to the Service Volunteer Coordinator by February 15 of each year.

(3) The Service Volunteer Coordinator will submit an annual report on the national status of the volunteer program. This report will provide information including the number and age distribution of Service volunteers nationwide, the number of hours contributed, the kinds of activities done by the volunteers, and the resultant benefits to the Service. A copy of the annual report, including a breakdown of volunteer data by Region, will be forwarded to each Region.

Reporting Categories

Monitoring & Studies

■ *Surveys & Censuses:* All methods of enumerating fish and wildlife populations, vegetative habitats, and routine baseline monitoring of air and water quality. For fish and wildlife, includes all inventory and monitoring procedures as outlined in 701 FW 2.1: Development of species lists, qualitative surveys, quantitative surveys, and special cooperative surveys. Also includes habitat classification and monitoring including development and use of GIS. Include survey planning, data collection, analysis, interpretation, and reporting.

■ *Studies & Investigations:* Research projects designed to identify the best methods to preserve, restore, and manage fish and wildlife populations and habitats. Includes studies conducted by refuge staff and outside researchers under refuge overview. Exclude contaminant studies and investigations and baseline water and air quality monitoring, which should be reported under category 6.c.

Habitat Restoration

■ *Wetland Restoration:* The conversion of altered or degraded on-refuge wetland habitats, including wetland riparian zones, back to their original condition by such actions as modifying water regimes and replanting native vegetation. Also include include creation of wetlands.

■ *Upland Restoration:* The conversion of altered or degraded on-refuge upland habitats back to their original condition by such actions as altering topography, soils, and/or existing vegetation and replanting native species.

■ *Riverine Restoration:* The conversion of altered or degraded

riverine habitats back to their original condition.

■ *Deepwater and Coral Reef Restoration:* The conversion of altered or degraded deepwater (lacustrine, estuarine, or marine) and coral reef habitats back to their original condition.

Habitat Management

■ *Water Level Management:* The manipulation of the timing, duration, and/or depth of water bodies to affect vegetation and/or create desired wildlife feeding conditions through the use of canals, levees, water control structures (WCS) and pumps. Includes monitoring. If vegetation and/or soils are also mechanically disturbed (e.g., disking, plowing, mowing) on a cyclical basis, report under “3.b. Manage Moist Soil Units”

■ *Moist Soil Management:* The production of native wildlife foods through a combination of water level manipulation and mechanical disturbance (e.g., disking, plowing, mowing). Includes monitoring. Report impoundments under this category (as opposed to “3.a. Manage Water Levels”) even if mechanical disturbance is done less than annually. Areas managed strictly by water level manipulation should be reported under “3.a. Manage Water Levels.”

■ *Graze/Mow/Hay:* The management of grasslands and other habitats for the benefit of wildlife by any combination of grazing, mowing, and haying. Includes planning, fence construction, equipment purchase, monitoring, maintenance, and overseeing permittees.

■ *Farming:* The planting of grains and other non-native crops for the purpose of feeding wildlife. Includes planning, preparation, planting, equipment purchase, monitoring, and maintenance.

■ **Forest Management:** Includes all mechanical forestry practices other than tree planting and exotic control that are designed to alter forested habitat composition or succession to benefit wildlife. Selective thinning or harvesting by staff or contractors are common techniques. Includes salvage harvesting for insect and disease control, salvage harvesting following wildfires, other forest health and forest pest management practices, and monitoring.

■ **Fire Management:** Prescribed burning and wildfire preparedness activities, including planning, fire line construction and maintenance, equipment purchase and maintenance, fire facility operations and maintenance, contracts for detection and initial attack, conducting burns, follow-up monitoring, and reporting. Actual wildfire suppression operations, including initial attack, are conducted under emergency appropriations and should not be reported in RCAR.

■ **Pest Plant Control:** The eradication, reduction, or control of invasive or exotic plants that pose an actual or potential threat to fish, wildlife, and their habitats using chemical, mechanical, and biological methods. Includes efforts to control or reduce weed infestations called for under State or local laws, and monitoring of pest plant control activities.

Fish and Wildlife Management

■ **Bird Banding:** Includes the marking and banding of birds as part of broad-based Service studies and record keeping. Efforts to mark species other than birds for refuge-specific or localized studies should be reported under “1.b. Studies/ Investigations.”

■ **Disease Monitoring & Treatment:** All activities associated with disease outbreaks including monitoring of behavior, retrieval of diseased fish or wildlife, diagnosis of causes, treatment, incineration or disposal of carcasses, and associated reporting.

■ **Reintroductions:** The introduction or release of wildlife into habitats historically occupied. Report related monitoring efforts under Surveys & Censuses or Studies & Investigations.

■ **Nest Structures:** The installation and maintenance of artificial nesting structures or protective devices. Examples include wood duck boxes, osprey nest platforms, placement of hay bales for waterfowl nesting platforms, and creation of artificial tree cavities.

■ **Pest, Predator & Exotic Animal Control:** The eradication, reduction, or control of invasive or exotic animals that pose an actual or potential threat to fish, wildlife, their habitats, and/or public health (e.g. mosquitoes). Animal pests may include insects associated with farming programs (cover under “3.d. Farming”).

Coordination Activities

■ **Interagency Coordination:** Interaction with other Federal, State, and local governments (excluding tribes) to share information, resolve problems, develop cooperative efforts, and manage species and habitats.

■ **Tribal Coordination:** All activities associated with the development of cooperative agreements, MOUs, annual funding agreements and similar cooperation/ coordination/ communication efforts with tribes and other native groups under the Indian Self-Determination Act of 1994. Excludes Alaska subsistence.

■ **Private Lands Activities (excluding Restoration):** Efforts to assist private land owners with habitat improvement and wildlife issues. Includes management advice, planning assistance, water level manipulation, farming, water purchase, nesting structures, fencing, plant and animal control.

Resource Protection

■ **Law Enforcement:** Patrols, boundary posting, easement monitoring, training, and other activities conducted to assure compliance with refuge regulations and associated laws to protect fish and wildlife resources, the visiting public, and government owned resources.

■ **Permits & Economic Use Management:** Explaining, issuing, and monitoring special use permits, making compatibility determinations

on economic uses (not public recreation), and related activities.

■ **Contaminant Investigation:** Contaminant investigation, studies, and monitoring, including agricultural irrigation drainwater studies; contaminant investigations; site characterization of leaking storage tanks and other toxic and hazardous waste sites; and baseline monitoring of air and water quality.

■ **Contaminant Cleanup:** The cleanup of leaking storage tanks and other toxic and hazardous waste sites; response to oil and other chemical spills.

■ **Water Rights Management:** Activities associated with compliance with state and federal laws to protect and achieve adequate supplies of water. Includes identification, protection, quantification, and adjudication activities such as reading, maintaining, and installing measurement devices and gaging stations, maintaining databases, preparing water management plans, attending local and State water use meetings, and monitoring off-refuge water uses. Purchase of water should be reported under Habitat Management categories 3a-d.

■ **Cultural Resource Management Coordination:** Activities supporting the study and protection of significant prehistoric and historic sites, including traditional religious sites as well as the evaluation of cultural resources and management of museum property. Include compliance activities associated with the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990.

■ **Land Acquisition Support**

Public Education and Recreation

■ **Provide Visitor Services:** Providing access, facilities, and programs for refuge visitors. Includes the planning (except CCP development), construction, operation, and maintenance of visitor related infrastructure such as access roads, informational and directional signs, visitor centers, trails, public use boat ramps, and nature trails; the offering of on-refuge informational, interpretive

and educational programs; surveys of public use and visitor satisfaction; and the conducting of hunting, fishing, and other recreational programs.

- *Outreach*: Off-site education of the public about Service activities through presentations at hearings and civic group meetings, the operations of portable or semi-permanent off-site exhibits, and the development and distribution of news releases and radio/TV spots.

Planning & Administration

- *Comprehensive Conservation Planning /Conservation Management Planning*

- *General Administration*

Provisions Unique to Alaska

- *Subsistence*
- *Public Access*
- *Manage Comm./Subsistence Fisheries*
- *Manage Private Lands*
- *Navigability Determinations*

Volunteer Services Report

Fiscal Year 1998

Station:

Organization Code:

Provide data on all volunteers working under signed volunteer services agreements. Include Student Conservation Association (SCA) volunteers.

1. Number of Volunteers by Age

Under 18	18-35	36-61	Over 61	Total

2. Number of Hours by Activity Category

<i>Monitoring & Studies</i>		<i>Coordination Activities</i>	
Surveys & Censuses		Interagency Coordination	
Studies & Investigations		Tribal Coordination	
<i>Habitat Restoration</i>		Private Lands Activities (ex. restoration)	
Wetland Restoration		<i>Resource Protection</i>	
Upland Restoration		Law Enforcement	
Riverine Restoration		Permits & Economic Use Management	
Deepwater/Coral Reef Restoration		Contaminant Investigation	
		Contaminant Cleanup	
<i>Habitat Management</i>		Water Rights Management	
Water Level Management		Cultural Resource Management	
Moist Soil Management		Land Acquisition Support	
Graze/Mow/Hay		<i>Public Education and Recreation</i>	
Farming		Provide Visitor Services	
Forest Management		Outreach	
Fire Management		<i>Planning & Administration</i>	
Pest Plant Control		Comprehensive Conservation Planning	
<i>Fish and Wildlife Management</i>		General Administration	
Bird Banding		<i>Provisions Unique to Alaska</i>	
Disease Monitoring & Treatment		Subsistence	
Reintroductions		Public Access	
Nest Structures		Manage Comm./Subsistence Fisheries	
Pest, Predator & Exotic Animal Control		Manage Private Lands	
		Navigability Determinations	
		Total Hours	

3. Operation Costs

Operations (Supplies, Materials, Equipment, Uniforms, etc.)	\$
Travel/Transportation, Per Diem, Housing/Utilities (etc.)	
Other (Staff/Volunteer Training, Recruitment, Recognition)	
Total Cost	\$

4. Staff Time/Salary for Administration of Program

Staff Time (Hours)	Total
Staff Salaries	\$

5. Volunteer Highlights

(Unique Activities, Special Achievements, Special Events, Partnerships.)

6. Special Recognition

a. Provide individual's name and station(s) where work was accomplished.

b. Why was this person outstanding in their support of the FWS?

7. Recommendations to Improve the Volunteer Program

8. We Need Photos

(Especially those with volunteers wearing the volunteer patch.) Please provide a caption with the person's name, site's name, and description of the project being accomplished.

**U.S. Department of the Interior
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<http://www.fws.gov>

